

May 17, 2017

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Media Advisory **Press Preview for “Donald Sultan: The Disaster Paintings”**

WHAT: Media open house for new exhibition “Donald Sultan: The Disaster Paintings”

WHEN: Thursday, May 25
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

WHERE: Smithsonian American Art Museum
Enter at Eighth and G streets N.W.

WHO: Virginia Mecklenburg, chief curator
Sarah Newman, James Dicke Curator of Contemporary Art

“Donald Sultan: The Disaster Paintings” is the first exhibition to focus on the artist’s important industrial landscape series, and it is the first time a significant number of these paintings are being exhibited together. Sultan combines industrial subject matter with industrial materials, such as tar and Masonite tiles, to create large-scale works that have such a physical presence they can be considered as much relief sculptures as paintings. Sultan’s choice of materials serves as a visual metaphor for the subject matter of the “Disaster Paintings.” Although created in the 1980s, the social and cultural anxieties about the fragility of systems and structures that Sultan’s paintings convey address issues that are still relevant, making this a timely moment to reexamine this body of work.

The exhibition is on view from May 26 through Sept. 4 and includes 12 large-scale paintings from 1984 to 1990, including “Plant, May 29, 1985” from the Smithsonian’s Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, which will be on view only at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The museum is the third stop on a [five-city national tour](#). “Donald Sultan: The Disaster Paintings” is organized by the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.

Interested media should RSVP to americanartpressoffice@si.edu. Information about the exhibition is available in an online press kit, <http://americanart.si.edu/pr/kits/#sultan>.

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